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The Spectator

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Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

Hamilton's student athlete admissions: what factors determine who gets a spot?

by Tori Lieberman '23
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

PHOTO COURTSEY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Hamilton students, 30% of whom are varsity athletes, walk down Martin's Way.

Athletes at Hamilton work their entire lives in order to get to a level to compete in college. But, at a D-III school like Hamilton, how that athletic skill affects their admissions process is not clear. *The Spectator* investigated whether admissions grants an unfair advantage to student-athletes, and, given the financial and social barriers to participation in sports, whether that could make Hamilton's recruited athletes whiter and wealthier than the rest of their class.

Hamilton is a member of the North Eastern Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC), which governs the College's rules for athletic recruitment. On the conference's website, they state that "NESCAC is committed first and foremost to academic excellence, and has established common practices to keep athletics strong and in proportion to the academic mission of the member institutions." Admissions offices work closely with athletic departments to ensure that students on all intercollegiate NESCAC teams are representative of each institution's student body and are admitted with the expectation of their full participation in the life of the college."

However, this outlook can result in teams which heavily rely on recruits from private and parochial schools. Monica Inzer, the Vice President for Enrollment Management, and Jon Hind '80, Director of Athletics, expressed surprise when informed that 21 out of the 28 members of the Men's Hockey team attended a private or parochial school at some point during their high school careers.

> ***"The majority of students who were recruited [for rowing] went to prep schools and had access to the sport of rowing due to the fact that they went to prep schools."***
> ***- John Myles '24***

"I don't think that's true," Inzer said when provided with the above statistic. "That surprises me having read their applications because it's such an international [group]. A lot of them go to schools in Canada. Are you sure they're private schools?"

The hockey team is not the only team from whom the vast majority of athletes come from private schools. 14 out of 15 members of the Men's Basketball team attended a private or parochial school during high school, while 12 of 14 athletes on the Men's and Women's Squash Teams went to private high schools. While some other teams are more balanced in terms of public school representation, there is clearly a trend that points to at least a passive favoring of private schools on some Hamilton athletic teams.

Hind emphasized that despite these trends of overrepresentation, "One of the marvelous things about Hamilton is the fact that we're need blind. We don't get fixated at all on private, public, parochial, prep," said Hind. "We're focused on student athletes who are admissible and who are good at their sport."

"The financial aid for us is something that we are never involved in," said Adam Stockwell, the Head Coach of the Men's Basketball Team and the only coach who would agree to comment on this story. "I know we've had some guys who were doing very very well and I know we've had some guys who had nothing. From a recruiting perspective, that's got no impact on us."

Inzer also added that one should not "assume that because someone goes to a private school that they're affluent," said Inzer. "There's a lot of financial aid in private high schools, particularly for students they're recruiting for athletics because they want to have socioeconomic diversity."

John Myles '24, a captain of the Men's Rowing team, sees the effect that private school dominance has on his own team. "The majority of students who were recruited [for rowing] went to prep schools and had access to the sport of rowing due to the fact that

they went to prep schools." Myles continued, "Within athletics at Hamilton in general, the fact that we draw so heavily on prep schools that are majority wealthy and white means… the people that you are going to get are going to be majority wealthy and white." Myles also added that this disparity has an adverse effect on team culture for those who do not fit that mold. "It makes it hard for non-wealthy and non-white people on the team to feel like they are worthy of being there."

Joe Simeone '26, a member of the Men's Track and Field Team, found a lack of discussions surrounding team members' socioeconomic status. "Some people obviously might have more than others, and you might see that in the stuff they show up to practice [in]," Simeone said. "We don't explicitly talk about money all that much, it's just something that exists…I couldn't tell you who went to a private school and who went to a public school."

"I don't think it would be any earth shattering news or surprising that recruiting for diversity is easier in some sports than in others just by the sheer [numbers] . . .We try to go to places where we can expand our pool in every diverse way. Are we always successful? No, we're improving."
- Jon Hind '80

Some teams are aware of the lack of racial diversity on their teams. "We all know in the forefront of our minds that we are an all white team," Maizley Tone '26, member of the Women's Lacrosse Team, said. "At least, 98 percent of us are [white]." Ravi Travers '24 agreed. "It's definitely a pretty white locker room," he said. "But we talk about these things a lot."

Teams that are mostly, if not completely, white find themselves struggling to fill DEI related positions on the team. "We have representatives for [the DEI initiative] but they're also white guys because pretty much the entire distance team is white guys," explained Simeone. "We've talked about it, we're aware of it."

Some athletes have found themselves playing sports on teams that have been almost entirely white their entire lives. "I'm pretty sure everyone's white [on Hamilton's Men's Hockey Team]. It's something that has been part of my hockey experience the whole way up," Ben Zimmerman '26 said. "We're not really acknowledging [the fact that it's all white kids] all the time. We had a Black kid on our team at Deerfield [Academy] and I don't think our team dynamic was different, but I'm sure it was different for him."

Inzer acknowledged differences in diversity of athletic recruits. "The pool of people that we can recruit is a little less diverse for athletes," said Inzer.

Hind agreed. "I don't think it would be any earth shattering news or surprising that recruiting for diversity is easier in some sports than in others just by the sheer [numbers]," said Hind. "We try to go to places where we can expand our pool in every diverse way. Are we always successful? No, we're improving."

But some students think that the problem lies with the Athletic Department. "Hamilton College Athletics is so biased towards wealthy white prep school students," said Myles. "[Racism] is compounded when you are at a private liberal arts school, and then it is compounded again when you specifically zoom in on sports at that school because athletics in general is not always very accessible."

After years of hard work and tons of time, money and travel given by athletes and their families to ensure that each student athlete is good enough to play at a collegiate level, the college recruitment process begins in earnest. This can take different forms depending on the sport. For many sports, athletes would go to recruiting camps to try and be seen by coaches. Hind described how coaches decide which camps to attend.

"A lot of this is budget driven…we have to pick and choose where we go based on where we think we'll get the best outcome to field competitive teams with kids who, most importantly, are competitive in the admissions process. It doesn't do us any good to go to a place where no one is competitive admissions wise," Hind said. "We'll go to a lot of camps and clinics where we know the host has a lot of the same centered values, so we would go to a Dartmouth camp, for example." Hind continued.

These camps come at a cost for athletes in order to participate and be seen by coaches. According to Stockwell, basketball camps can cost anywhere from $65 to $350 with no financial aid offered.

Football camps may be more optional in order to get recruited. "Schools will invite you to a showcase if you want to go play in a showcase, but at most it's like $25, $50 to go play. Schools will sometimes have them for free," said Kyle Bratcher '26. "I didn't do [camps/showcases] personally, and it worked out for me, but it's definitely an option that a lot of people take…but if you want to, it can really only help you."

Some sports use a simpler process for recruitment. Track coaches, for example, just look at an athlete's times, which erases many of the barriers to recruitment since there are no travel costs and fees to attend necessary camps.

Tone told *The Spectator* how much recruiting camps can cost for lacrosse and various fees that come along with it. She said that some camps could cost $600 a day to attend, while others would be as low as $250. She explained additional costs such as hotel fares, food, and other day-to-day expenses. She also discussed the need for clips: "They have these people filming at every single field and you can buy the film for $150 for the tournament, you get all the film so you can send it to college coaches." For Travers, soccer camps generally cost less to attend, as little as $60-80 a day for a one or two-day camp, while some pricier ones that house potential athletes can go up to around $350.

Equipment costs vary depending on the sport. Tone said lacrosse costs can be hundreds of dollars, while hockey required skates and other equipment which cost from $400 to

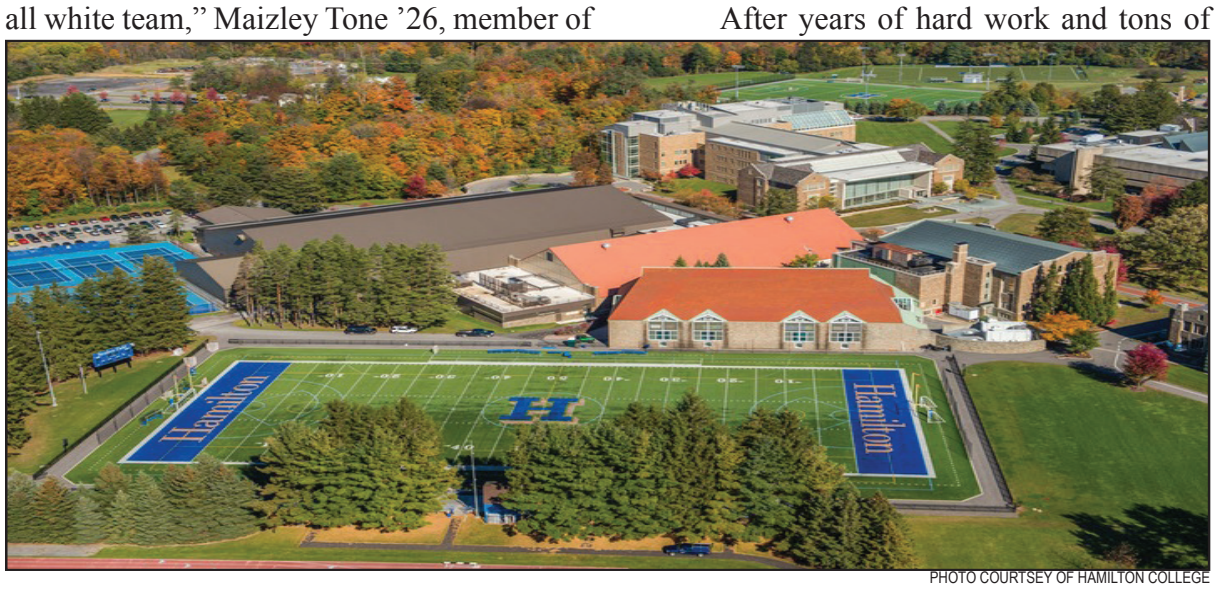

PHOTO COURTSEY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Steuven Field is the home to several Hamilton sports teams.

$800. Youth hockey especially requires families to spend a lot of money on club sports, as well as travel in order to support their child while playing the sport. Zimmerman explained that youth hockey could cost up to $15,000 a year with travel about every weekend. Football also has equipment costs, but generally not as great as lacrosse and hockey, according to Bratcher. “How much you want to spend on cleats, how much you want to spend on other stuff is up to you. It really depends on what you are willing to spend.”

"Growing up, the financial burden on people's parents is crazy... There's a reason why only rich white kids are playing hockey and obviously people are trying to change that, but hockey's super expensive and it's totally a problem."
- Ben Zimmerman '26

“We are kind of all at the point now where people want to help us out…but growing up, the financial burden on people’s parents is crazy,” Zimmerman said. “There’s a reason why only rich white kids are playing hockey, and obviously people are trying to change that, but hockey’s super expensive and it's totally a problem.”

Myles explained that, “No matter how much you repeat 'we’re a welcoming space [for] people of color and low income people,' just the fact that it's an athletic team at a place like Hamilton is going to make it inaccessible or make it unwelcoming.” He continued, “It's very sad because I’m very grateful for the experience that I've had on this team and I want other people to be able to experience that, but I just think that sometimes no matter how welcoming you might think the team is, it's still gonna feel inaccessible to people.”

Tone described her commitment to playing club lacrosse while in high school. She would drive two hours twice a week for practice, along with tournaments either to Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Massachusetts, or Maryland from Maine every weekend. “Joining a club team you pay a large sum of money, I think it was like 10K for a full year,” said Tone. “These club teams do have large scholarship funds, so if your family is looking to send your kids to play or whatnot but you don’t have the financial means, they do have scholarship money to make it more accessible. However, that doesn’t cover everything.”

Travers also found himself having to commit much of his and his parent’s free time to playing soccer for his club team. “The biggest financial burden for my parents was we drove an hour 45 [minutes] away twice during the week and then once on the weekends for games …but that club cost, I think, $4,000, $5,000 a year,” Travers said. “A lot of my teammates were on financial aid with the team because it definitely was a burden both timewise and moneywise.”

Though Travers was able to continue playing club soccer up until being recruited for college, he witnessed friends who stopped playing this high level of soccer because of the financial strains on their families. “I carpooled with a friend and eventually the cost got too much for his family so he couldn’t do it anymore,” Travers said.

“I went to this camp and the best club in the region asked me to play for them, so I did, at another cost for my parents and more time that they had to put into getting me to and from there.” Travers went on to describe how the benefits of high-level club soccer teams are not evenly distributed: “There was another friend from a lower socioeconomic status than I was, and he was on financial aid from the club and only made it for a year, and then the next two years it was just me. The biggest thing was that [my parents] had a job that allowed them flexibility.”

Zimmerman was recruited from one tournament that he played with a club team. But considering he went to Deerfield Academy, a prep school in Massachusetts, he says that this experience was unusual for recruitment.

“The Deerfield head hockey coach knows all the NESCAC coaches. But at the same time, he didn’t help me with Hamilton. It was because I went to that camp,” said Zimmerman.” I think for a lot of kids, that’s not the case. Going to a prep school like Deerfield definitely gives you better access to being recruited by NESCAC coaches.”

Zimmerman described the connection between Deerfield and NESCAC coaches: “It goes something like I ask my Deerfield coach, ‘Hey, I reached out to the Middlebury coach and he didn’t respond, could you send him an email and say, come watch my kid?’ Honestly, a lot of it happens outside our hands. The coaches call each other and talk.”

Travers also found it helpful to attend a high school that Hamilton Admissions is familiar with. “Because my club was in upstate NY, my coaches knew the Hamilton coaches. I think that was also helpful because they’re like two hours from each other,” said Travers. “[Ithaca] is a fairly wealthy school district… I was able to get recruited by all these places which again are only places you hear about if your family and school is tuned into that niche of academics.”

Myles had suggestions on how to change recruitment in order to recruit more financially and racially diverse teams, though he didn’t go through the recruitment process himself. “On the coaches and recruiters side of it, reaching out to programs that are more accessible, whether it be programs that are funded by something other than the members or programs that are specifically designated towards low income people or people of color, like actively seeking that out, is really important and a very active way of fighting the accidental bias that happens when you just recruit from the same schools.”

While coaches often reach out to students they believe would be a good fit, some Hamilton students reach out directly to coaches via a questionnaire on Hamilton’s website. Stockwell said, “I would say 75 percent of our students are ones we’ve initiated contact with because we’ve seen them play or someone’s recommended them and the other 25 percent would be students that reached out to us initially.”

If both a student and coach are interested in having them play for Hamilton, a coach will ask a student for a pre-read. This is a copy of the student’s transcript, SAT scores if they submit them, and what classes they are taking their senior year. Stockwell continued, “We have a great relationship with Admissions, so we get an idea of what preliminary feedback would be. It’s pretty generic, not really a defined answer. It just guides us in the direction of the student. If they continue to be strong in their classes and do as well or better than what they’ve been doing and write a great application then they would have a good chance, but not definite. Then we get a general [idea] of ‘keep moving forward with them because they’re a potential candidate here’ or ‘that student’s gonna have a tough time.’”

If the pre-read goes well and the Admissions Department says that a student athlete is a “potential candidate,” the next step could be for a coach to give the student an offer of support. Inzer said that “At Hamilton, [an offer of support] means the coach has shared the information with admissions that says, ‘looks like the student is in the ballpark of representativeness and [the coaches] are saying ‘I'd like to support you in the admission process if you will commit to me.’” Inzer emphasized that an offer of support does not by any means guarantee admission to the College. Stockwell agreed. “Admissions, or that office, makes the final decision on all students.”

The NESCAC Conference’s website states that when recruiting, “The NESCAC

coaches actively identify and recruit student-athletes and act as advocates for them; but no coach at any NESCAC college has the authority to offer, promise, or otherwise guarantee a spot in the incoming class to any recruited student-athlete."

However, this language can get confusing. Though athletes know that they are not fully accepted to Hamilton until their acceptance letter, an offer of support from a coach can give many students a false impression that they are accepted to Hamilton.

"With D-III NESCAC there is a chance that I won't get in. There's a 97 percent chance that I will get in and a 3 percent chance I won't," said Tone. "So, let's say, my senior

"At a place like Hamilton, the coaches don't have a lot of sway to support a kid through admissions. You have to be good enough both ways [academically and athletically]," he said. "They don't guarantee you admission, period. If I had completely blown up senior year, I might not have gotten in. They can only guarantee you their support with admissions...Most of the time that means that you will get in."
- Ravi Travers '24

Fall I fail all my classes, and do horribly in them, and just turn into an awful person, and my essay is horrible, they won't accept me. I don't know that I'm in until decisions come out, but there's a part of me that knows that I will have a spot here."

Zimmerman had a similar experience of being confident that he was accepted to Hamilton after he received an offer of support but before he received his acceptance letter. "When they say [an offer of support] to you, I'm not even sure if that means you're automatically going to get in or not. I know that once they said [to me] we want to offer you a spot on our team for next year at Hamilton College. So then I say, 'great, I'll accept your offer, I'm going to apply ED1 and then for me, I knew that I was going to get in at that point.'"

Zimmerman can only speculate about what the admissions process looks like behind the scenes. "I think when they shake your hand and say we want to offer you a spot, we're going to support you, it means that you are a good enough hockey-athlete-scholar combo that you're gonna make it through. I don't really know what it looks like. I don't think they're in the boardroom with whoever's deciding on admissions being like you gotta have Ben Zimmerman, he has XYZ, but I think they're kind of doing that...They're doing something. They're advocating for their recruiting class of kids that they think have a chance of getting through."

Travers echoed this sentiment. "At a place like Hamilton, the coaches don't have a lot of sway to support a kid through admissions. You have to be good enough both ways [academically and athletically]," he said. "They don't guarantee you admission, period. If I had completely blown up senior year, I might not have gotten in. They can't guarantee you admission, they can only guarantee you their support with admissions." However, he then added that "Most of the time that means that you will get in."

Speaking about the chances of not getting in with an offer of support, Tone said: "It did happen to my friend. They said she was okay and they didn't accept her. So it does happen. But it's very very rare that that will happen." Inzer did not provide *The Spectator* with the exact numbers of offers of support from Hamilton coaches that resulted in admission offers.

During the admissions process for athletes, admissions officers will sort student athletes based on their academic performance into three bands, A, B, and C bands. When asked about this process, Inzer said that, "It's not something that we share publicly with students or recruits, and we shouldn't," Inzer said. "Others in NESCAC might…but we never do because we don't want any student to label themselves at a part of the process, so out of respect for our athletes, our students, and to be sensitive, we don't talk about that with families."

"[The bands are] an internal system we use to describe representativeness," said Inzer. "That is a little bit of the structure we are using to ensure our athletes are representative and that we have students at every range [so] athletes look like non-athletes."

While Inzer described the band system as solely for internal use, some athletes had a different understanding. "I believe it goes by GPA from A, B and C. I don't know these specific numbers, but I know you get like a set number of A bands, set number B bands, set number of C bands," said Bratcher. "You get more A and B bands than you get C bands. In each recruiting class, you can only have an X number of C bands. So you only have like a couple of these, but then you'll have more of the As and Bs." Bratcher added that, "I think A bands are kids that have a really good chance of getting into the school by themselves without coaches support."

PHOTO COURTSEY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Zimmerman '26 skates at the Sage Rink.

Tone echoed this sentiment. "It tells your coach if you need a lot of support, a little bit of support or you can just get in by yourself," said Tone. "Coaches have a specific number of bands they can pull."

Zimmerman noted that coaches don't generally tell athletes what band they are in. "I didn't get told I was an A band, B band or C band because I don't think they tell us anymore."

When asked if he knew if his coach was allowed to admit some C and B band athletes, Zimmerman replied: "Yes, but then again, what's a C band to us is different then what's a C band to Trinity or what's a C band to Utica. It's harder at NESCAC schools than it is at Harvard or Cornell, not because the school is better, but just because it's a smaller school, so you can't hide. Everyone on our team has to be up to a certain standard."

However, sometimes the tie to academic rigor can lead to the lower bands being the brunt of a joke. "There's a couple kids who will make fun of themselves and will say, 'Oh, I'm the most C band athlete ever,' but it's not something we really talk about," said Zimmerman.

Although Hamilton doesn't hold spots for athletes, there is discussion between coaches and Admissions regarding each teams' needs for the coming year and their recruitment goals. "[Jon Hind] works with each coach to say, 'Okay, swimming, how many people are graduating next year? How many students might you need?'" Inzer told *The Spectator*. "You don't wanna over-recruit and then cut students…In the end, if you look at the number of spots on all of our teams and add it up, it's about 30 percent of our students who play a varsity sport."

May 4, 2023

Campus art display responds to Jodel threat

by Meg Stroup '26
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

In the aftermath of the shooting threat made on Jodel on April 16, Hamilton students have come together to create art displays with the hope of promoting dialogue in the community. Dani Bernstein '24, an art major from outside of Boston, and co-creator Freya Langenberg '24 have developed an artistic centerpiece for conversations regarding the threat with the erection of wooden boards at KJ's main entrance, including a painting that has since been removed. When asked about what piqued their interest in art, Bernstein explained, "I started making art as a little kid but have found it to be a release and a therapeutic experience. Over time I got really into painting in high school when it was kind of like a safe place for me to think about things and engage with ideas."

Bernstein has since carried his passion for art onto campus in the form of social activism and a method of providing visibility for the student body. "I hope that my art increases trans representation, and makes both Hamilton and the world kind of more friendly, loving, present places," said Bernstein. Regarding the recent events, Bernstein continued to carry the message about this very sensitive topic, as he and his collaborators "wanted to create both a place of communal healing and an opportunity for people to share their voices and be in the community and engage and reflect on these events together."

Bernstein emphasized the importance of facilitating conversations about how violent threats affect individuals, as they believe the administration has not thoroughly addressed the impacts on the community, pointing to the administration's "lack of a response, or mental health accommodations." Specifically, the Student Assembly sent a request to administrators proposing the cancellation of classes on the Monday and Tuesday after the threat to give students a couple of days to mentally process and recuperate, but this request was denied. Regarding the administration's response, Bernstein brought up the value in "normalizing that people have feelings and reactions and all sorts of thoughts surrounding the piece and what happened, so we wanted to validate all of those thoughts and create conversation around it in the way that we felt that the school should have been supporting but really was not."

As you walk by the entrance of KJ, you see six wooden boards with various messages, written in graffiti-esque text, including "Am I next?", "School shouldn't be scary," and "It's not funny," along with countless smaller messages written by students. Bernstein explained the purpose of such a large and noticeable piece. "I originally put up a little painting that was taken and so in response to that we decided to do something bigger than kind of couldn't be moved or stolen." The original painting, which displayed the message "School shouldn't be scary," was taken down by a Hamilton archivist with the purpose of preservation, according to Bernstein.

Bernstein explained his reaction to the painting's disappearance, saying, "while I don't blame him and I understand where he was coming from, and understand why he did what he did, it feels like to me a physical reflection of larger metadynamics going on where the school is taking our labor, emotional and affective labor, which we are all doing for free. We as students are giving this work and the school is using it for promotional material out of context."

Bernstein gave a shout out to Lengenberg, his collaborator who spent nothing short of two full days helping to create and build these pieces. He also wanted to acknowledge that "we don't feel a particular sense of ownership over the piece but kind of hope that it has developed its own meaning and that everybody on campus that was affected by those events can feel a sense of ownership around it and that it can help educate members of our community."

Bernstein plans to continue to use art as a tool to express student experiences and hold the administration accountable. They mentioned future plans for campus, saying, "We are hoping to move towards a lot more public work in the next year or so regarding experiences like this and experiences with being queer on campus and with inadequate mental health support, and kind of pieces around all of those issues."

PHOTO BY DEANNA DURBEN '25

Dani Bernstein '24 and Freya Langenberg '24 created an art piece consisting of six wooden boards with student messages that stands outside the main entrance of KJ.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANI BERNSTEIN '24

Dani Bernstein '24 crafted the public piece 'school shouldn't be scary' (24x20in). In an Instagram post on April 16, he encouraged students to add their work or reflections outside KJ.

Dear Hamilton Community,

As our semester draws to a close, we hope you find our last issue both enjoyable and informative. We have two beautifully researched longform pieces this week, in addition to our regularly scheduled content. We wish everyone both a successful finals week, and a relaxing summer.

It's been really rewarding to lead *The Spectator* this semester, and we want to give a shout out to all our fantastic editors and writers. Especially Emma, our managing editor, who is spectacular, meticulous, and — unfortunately for us — graduating. We're also so grateful that Stella, Huzair, and Cole have devoted so much time and effort into *The Spectator* even in their senior year. This year would not have been a success without each of you!

Warmly,
Deanna and Anoushka

The Spectator

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Celebrating 156 years,
we *were first published as* The Hamilton Campus *in 1866.*

The Spectator's Letter to the Editor section is designed to be a forum for the entire Hamilton community to discuss and debate campus, local, national, and global issues. Pieces published in the section express the opinion of the individual writers and are not necessarily the opinions of *The Spectator*, its editors or the Media Board.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 800 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 800 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

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May 4, 2023

Divestment, Disillusionment, and Disrespect: our experience with David Solomon

by Three Hamilton College Seniors
LETTER TO THE EDITOR 5/4

Dear Editor,

On March 3, we attended the Senior Networking with Trustees event in the hope of speaking with trustees about divestment and other important campus issues. As students involved in climate justice and sustainability efforts on campus, we took this rare face-to-face opportunity to ask the trustees questions about the College's stance on divestment.

We were able to speak with David Solomon '84, the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Hamilton College and the CEO of Goldman Sachs. We first asked him about the College's endowment in an attempt to seek more clarification on the information found on the Endowment page of Hamilton's website, which currently reads: "As of year end 2021, the endowment has less than two percent direct exposure to fossil fuels… The remaining direct fossil fuel exposure in the endowment today resides in legacy private investments made prior to 2009 that will liquidate over time."

We assumed Solomon would likely shut us down, but he seemed excited about the question, and actually brought up the term divestment himself. However, he very quickly gave the impression that he felt this was a good time to impart his insights to us. The conversation quickly devolved into nearly 30 minutes of talking about climate change and the College's role in climate adaptation and mitigation. Throughout the discussion, Solomon's attitude and behavior toward us and our questions carried extremely racist and sexist undertones. His blatant ignorance and disrespect is one we feel obligated to share with the campus community.

Solomon was unaware that the Hamilton website says only two percent of the endowment is directly exposed to fossil fuels, stating it was likely higher. He also claimed he did not know what we were talking about in reference to "legacy private investments." Solomon then indicated that he thought fossil fuel divestment was a stupid movement. He called us hypocritical for advocating for divestment when we still use electricity and drive cars – and said that if we traveled to countries like China, India, and Cambodia we would see how the world "really works," and then see if we want to live like that. He often contradicted himself, saying with similarly charged undertones, the "West" is the center of technology and innovation, and it is our responsibility to pull the "East" into a climate transition, yet also saying it is not the College's job to participate in this transition. The student and faculty body of Hamilton have been advocating for divestment since at least 2013, to no avail. Solomon's views on divestment reflect this institutional stubbornness to understand the College as a necessary leader of reasonable climate action and mitigation amidst such a dire crisis.

At one point, he laughed and told us he'd be dead in thirty years, so climate change would be our problem anyway. Yet, later in the conversation, he asserted his optimism for the future of society and our planet. His willful ignorance continued, with seemingly no intention to actually learn or genuinely engage with us beyond belittling us. When we brought up the topic of climate justice and he didn't know what it was, we patiently explained it to him. Yet, as the conversation continued, Solomon still claimed that he had no idea what climate justice is. He lacked any regard for some of the most integral concepts our Hamilton education has taught us– intersectionality and justice– as anyone who has fulfilled the Social, Structural, and Institutional Hierarchies (SSIH) requirement should be able to tell you.

When discussing the College's role in just climate change action, we went into the purpose and role of the college's endowment. We insisted that since Hamilton is supposed to be run for the benefit of the students, financially fueling the climate crisis through our endowment is antithetical to our mission. Solomon then said probably the most clearly racially-charged sentiment — he pointed at each one of us, claiming that all of us must be on financial aid; he implied that we should show immense gratitude because we are in debt to the college's endowment and that we should not complain about its investment portfolio. Once we all looked shocked at the claim, he quickly backtracked, citing the statistic that something like 80% of Hamilton students are on some kind of financial aid. It is important to note that the group of six or so people talking to him were all non-male, and at least half were people of color. We believe that he never would have assumed we were all on financial aid if we were the group of white male students in suits talking to him twenty minutes prior.

Solomon spoke to us in a patronizing and disrespectful manner. Despite knowing nothing about us and our roles in our communities and history of activist work, Solomon claimed he does more in a week to help climate change than we will ever do in our entire lives. When we asked him to elaborate, he attributed his "capital accumulation" and position of power. Solomon's "capital accumulation" and position of power has certainly helped him in other ways– in November of 2022, Goldman Sachs paid $12 million to a former female partner, settling claims of gender-based discrimination and sexist hostility in the workplace. The partner named Solomon specifically as one of the executives who made the workplace hostile to women, citing a lewd sexual comment he made. In June, a lawsuit against Goldman Sachs will likely go to trial over accusations of widespread gender-based discrimination in pay and promotion.

Finally, we felt that one simple yet incredibly harmful statement he made aptly reflects his stance on our efforts combating climate change: "that's a nice thought, but that's not how the world works." We are ashamed, embarrassed, and scared that David Solomon is the face and voice of Hamilton College through his position as the Chair of the Board. Solomon's opinions are not just words – his sentiments hold real weight and power. His words do so much damage to the members of our campus community advocating for and most affected by climate change.

As seniors, we are leaving Hamilton College, a place we have loved and cherished, feeling disillusioned. Solomon's term as a Charter Trustee expires in 2024, and we strongly urge the Hamilton community to take action to prevent his further tenure on the Board not only for his lackluster stance on divestment or his apathy towards the student body and our future, but his ignorance and weaponization of capital and power that leaves those he talks to feeling powerless. Hamilton deserves better.

– Three members of the Class of 2023

May 4, 2023

Parkhurst Dining Service to replace Bon Appétit Management Company on July 1st

by Sarafina Madden ’26
STAFF WRITER

In the next academic year, beginning July 1, Hamilton will transition from Bon Appétit Management Company to Parkhurst Dining Services, a change that has incited debate amongst the student body. Some students attest to their love for Bon Appétit’s healthy menu and variety of options, others look forward to new dining offerings.

Leaders of dining services at Hamilton engaged in a meticulous search for a new dining service provider. Director of procurement and administrative services Lucy Burke shares her insight into Hamilton’s transition to Parkhurst. Burke explained that it is “best practice” to conduct a bidding process frequently and Hamilton “had not bid the dining services vendor for a very long time.”

She explained that the transition has been long in the making, with the search process having begun last Fall. Ultimately, five companies submitted a proposal. Burke details the evaluation process, explaining that “students and staff reviewed the proposals, evaluated the onsite presentations, and gathered references from other campuses,” with Parkhurst emerging as the “leading vendor.”

Burke also described the factors Hamilton assessed in vendors, which included their “general approach as a dining partner, sustainability, their program, menus and concepts, technology, and quality and improvement management.” Furthermore, Burke asserted that all current hourly workers in dining services at Hamilton will receive an offer to continue work with Parkhurst and that she is “hopeful that the staff will choose to stay and work at Hamilton.” She explained that food options should look fairly similar to what is currently available, with the addition of Parkhurst’s options and student input.

Several universities currently use Parkhurst dining services, including Bard College, Bucknell University, and Mount Saint Mary’s College. Students have shared their apprehension about the new dining options as they have become familiar with the consistency of Bon Appétit’s options and have established their eating routines. However, others have expressed excitement about Parkhurst’s debut and the potential for new dining offerings. First-year student Kenna Smith ’26 expressed her contentment with her dining experience at Hamilton, attesting to Bon Appétit’s variety of options. Regarding the transition to Parkhurst, she shared that she is “excited to see what they have to offer” but also that she believes “they won’t be changing too much.” Her favorite go-to meal at Commons is “salad and some type of bread, or pasta and a salad.” Another first-year student, Abby Baron ’26, said she is “excited and hopes they have as many options as a Bon Appétit.” Baron’s go-to meal at Commons is “chicken, fruit, sweet potatoes, and pasta.”

Overall, the Hamilton student body looks forward to welcoming Parkhurst dining in the Fall and the new dining options that will soon affect Commons, McEwen, the Howard Diner, and Bundy Cafe.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FOODMANAGEMENT.CO

Parkhurst Dining is a company originally founded in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The dining company aims "to keep students fueled for the demands of the academic, athletic, and social success, while also serving as a convener and hub for the entire campus community."

PHOTOs COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

Soper Commons Dining Hall (pictured above) and McEwen Dining Hall (pictured below) are the two main dining options available for Hamilton students.

SpecTunes

Our Staff Reccs!

I Will Be Your Friend - Sade

Get Gone - Fiona Apple

Boys Are Cuter When They're Crying - Venus & the Flytraps

New Perspective - Noah Kahan

Your Song - Elton John

Burn, Burn, Burn - Zach Bryan

Carnival - Natalie Merchant

Hamilton welcomes Flo Milli and binki

by Meg Stroup '26
A&E CONTRIBUTER

The event everyone has marked in their calendars is finally around the corner! Our celebrity appearance is only days away and the Hill could not be more prepared to see Flo Milli and binki make the trek up to Clinton and take the stage. C&C day is the last hurrah for students to truly let loose before beginning their hibernation in the library, and the cloudy weather will not prevent the campus from engaging in wide celebration.

You may know Tamia Monique Carter, also known as Flo Milli, for her hits "Beef Flomix" and "In the Party," or you may just recognize her sound from popular media platforms, as she is a viral TikTok and Instagram sensation. She has received particular recognition for her distinct rap style, which is both bouncy and upbeat. Flo Milli, known for both her ambition and lightheartedness, achieved immense success as a young artist, gaining a feature on the *Billboard 200* by the age of 23. Flo Milli has always had a deep love for the stage. In her hometown of Mobile, Alabama, she took every chance to perform at church and in talent shows, and she soon moved on to creating her own music, drawing inspiration from rappers like Nicki Minaj, MC Light, and Missy Elliot.

Flo Milli began transforming her desire to perform into a career at a young age. She wrote her first song at nine, began rapping with her friends in a group at eleven, and wrote her first solo song, "No Hook," at age 16. Flo Milli began releasing her songs on SoundCloud and Youtube in 2017, and by 2018 the release of her song "Beef FloMix," a remix of Playboi Carti's "Beef," brought her career to the next level, giving her worldwide recognition. Since then, she has continued to release hit singles, growing her fame and signing onto a record label with RCA Records.

Flo Milli's career is not only driven by her love of music and performance. When asked in a 2022 interview about why she creates music, she said, "It's to make music to make girls feel confident" and "know who they were meant to be unapologetically." Her message has resonated with a large audience, as her sound has reached far and wide.

Baraka Andrew Ongeri, known on stage as binki, will also be taking this stage this Friday. He is a Pennsylvania native, later moving to North Carolina, where he attended UNC Greensboro and began creating music. He released his first single, "Marco," in 2018, and a year later went on to receive a feature in the entertainment magazine *Pigeons and Planes* as one of their "Best New Artists." Hamilton is catching binki with his career on the rise, as he continues to surprise new fans with his distinct sound. His work is a refreshing combination of diverse generations of styles, genres, and techniques, spanning from alternative to indie, while also incorporating dance and electronic music.

These performers will certainly definitely a lasting impression, but let's not forget about Heat, Hamilton's beloved dance team, who will be kicking off the show. Hamilton cannot wait for this exciting day to finally arrive, so expect high energy at the old tennis courts behind the Field House on Friday, May 5 at 4 p.m.!

PHOTO COURTESY OF REFINERY29

Flo Milli has collaborated with rappers like $NOT and Rico Nasty.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LEVEL MUSIC BLOG

On Spotify, binki has over 700,000 monthly listeners.

Bachelor & Bachelorette

Elena Dickison ’25

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANOUSHKA ASWIN '25

Name: Elena Dickison
Hometown: J.O.B
Home on Campus: South
Major: Anthropology
Turn on: Is 4’10
Turn off: Is not a famous actor/comedian featured in Matilda and It’s Always Sunny.
If you were a Hamilton Dorm, which dorm would you be? Coop because not enough people want me.
If you were the love child of any two musicians, who would they be? Rebecca Black and Paul McCartney.
What TV genre best describes you? TLC shows.
What’s the best pick-up line you’ve ever used/had used on you? Are you from Tennessee please date me.
What are three things you cannot live without? The Executive branch, the Legislative branch, and the Judicial branch.
If you were any social space, what would it be? Student Assembly meetings.
If you could join one group on campus what would it be? Campo.
What would you give a thumbs up? Arthritis.
Thumbs down? Dogs, children, really old people (60s is fine).
Who is your campus crush? The trivia hosts.
What would your perfect date be? What is my perfect date? I break into Tiffany's at midnight. Do I go for the vault? No, I go for the chandelier. It’s priceless. As I’m taking it down, a man catches me. He tells me to stop. It's his father’s business. He’s Tiffany. We brush pinkies.
What is the weirdest thing in your room? Marge (sorry honey I’ll be home soon).
Lights on or off? Strobe.
If you could remake the points system, what would be the number one offense? Taking your shoes off in public (but if you take your socks off too, you’re fine).
What’s the last lie you told? I don’t live in Mass, I only live in the moment.
What was your first thought this morning? Why am I naked in the woods covered in blood...oh god it’s happening again.
What is the meaning of life? FBGM.

Interested in being featured as a Bachelor or Bachelorette?
Want to nominate a friend? Email featspec@hamilton.edu

Adam Koplik ’25

PHOTO COURTESY OF ADAM KOPLIK '25

Name: Adam Koplik
Hometown: New Paltz, NY
Home on Campus: Carnegie
Major: Data Science
Turn on: People understanding very specific pop culture references.
Turn off: Bees. Hate those things. The Bee Movie woman made a really weird choice.
If you were the love child of any two musicians, who would they be? Jack Black (that one time he made music do you remember that that was so cool and Jack Johnson (the curious george pancake guy).
What’s the best pick-up line you’ve ever used/had used on you? “Do you want an Oreo?” (I did)
What’s your type? A-positive.
Where do you go when you want to be alone? Close my eyes. If I can’t see you, you can’t see me. Classic kindergarten rules apply.
If you could join one group on campus what would it be? Those people who walk around with big sticks. I think they’re for a class but I don't know what. They’ve got it figured out. That's the life.
What rule would you break at Hamilton if you could get away with it? I’d go behind the counter at Diner and see what they're hiding back there.
What would you give a thumbs up? The part in the song “Iris” by The Goo Goo Dolls when it sounds like the song is ending and then it all kicks back in and they go “AND I DON’T WANT THE WORLD TO SEE ME”
Thumbs down? When the song “Iris” by The Goo Goo Dolls actually ends
Who is your campus crush? Everyone goddammit
What would your perfect date be? Commons squable, joined by at least one sports team to cheer me on (football?)
What is the weirdest thing in your room? I have a rock I formed an emotional attachment to on move-in day this semester (my friend accidentally had it in his pocket)
If you could remake the points system, what would be the number one offense? Putting any song on fast play at diner. Let me play The Lorax soundtrack for God’s sake!
What’s the last lie you told? “Oh okay got it.” (I didn’t even hear what they said)
What is the meaning of life? A backwards baseball hat that conveys youth and a disregard for authority.

Hamilton Horoscopes

by Mikaella Tortusa ’25
RESIDENT ASTROLOGIST

The segment is back, offering new insights! Look towards our horoscopes to take stock of what you have to look forward to this week.

Jan. 20-Feb. 18: Aquarius
Feb. 19-March 20: Pisces
March 21-April 19: Aries
April 20-May 20: Taurus
May 21-June 20: Gemini
June 21-July 22: Cancer
July 23-Aug. 22: Leo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22: Virgo
Sept. 23-Oct. 22: Libra
Oct.23-Nov. 21: Scorpio
Nov. 22-Dec. 21: Sagittarius
Dec. 22-Jan. 19: Capricorn

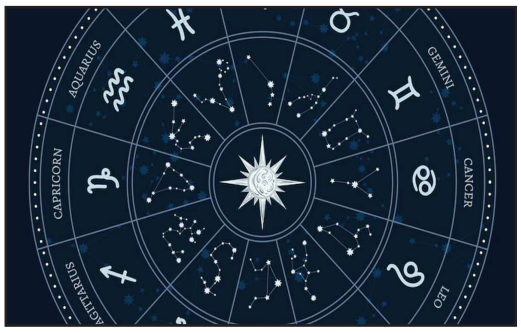


PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES

Moon Phase

Today's moon phase is the waxing gibbous. Assuming it's a clear night, the waxing ibbous moon will then be visible through most of the night before setting just before sunrise.

The gibbous moon is the final phase before total fullness, so don't spend it chasing after your wildest dreams. Carefully consider which of your goals are near completion and just need a final push for you to reach them. Once you make your selection, you should feel free to proceed at top speed.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES

Aries

There may be a moment or two when you feel responsible for everything in the world and like it's your duty to take care of everyone. Relax, let this wash over you, and let it go. It's not a burden so much as a demonstration of how connected you are to the people and things in your own life, and how much you care. That's a good thing.

Taurus

Great wealth is available to you today. It may not be monetary, but some of it just may be. Look around you, do your best, and take measure of all the opportunities that are being given to you today. This might be the start of an upturn in your well-being and status with co-workers or family members. Think rationally and reap the benefits. Feel rich and blessed.

Gemini

People may come to you for help in making a difficult decision or two. They trust you and value your opinion. This will be second nature to you and no decision will be beyond your capabilities. The world is not so big that it can hold choices you are unable to make or decisions that could overwhelm you. Be exceptionally confident, capable, and at ease in public and private sectors today.

Cancer

Kindness will take you very far today. It's not a show of weakness or inferiority to engage in that random act of kindness. Think of it as acting out of generosity of spirit. The bigger your heart today, the more respect and cooperation will come your way. Open doors for people, give up a chair for the elderly, or compliment someone on their clothes. Make sure your kindness is genuine and from a genuine place. Then you're virtually unassailable.

Leo

It could be hard to sit still today and every little distraction may look more like an invitation to take a break or start the next thing. Be productive anyway by concentrating on short tasks and short conversations. A checklist helps keep things smooth and organized. Use the Pomodoro method or reward yourself with small things like snacks to keep you motivated. Afterwards, maybe take a nice long walk, stretch those legs, and shake the day's dust off your shoulders.

Virgo

This is one of those days when everything is up in the air, and you doubt that you could do much even if you tried. Nonetheless, things can go well when some unexpected good luck comes your way. Your carefree attitude can attract some unexpected help to keep you going and to make things interesting if they're not fun. Uncertainty can be inspiring in its own way.

Libra

Anger could raise its ugly little head today, but you have things under control. Don't engage, if possible, and tactfully deflect the worst of whatever misunderstanding caused the outbreak. If it's repressed anger, there may never be any loud or angry words. You can smooth any ruffled feathers simply by standing up and not being intimidated or rushed into any action or opinion. Be at your best today.

Scorpio

Some days something blows up and there's nothing you can do. It has nothing to do with you, actually; you just happen to be there. While today will probably be uneventful, you may feel emotionally vulnerable and find yourself imagining one worst case scenario after another. Consider these imaginings as drills or dress rehearsals and don't let any of this unnerve you. You're fine and will be fine no matter what.

Sagitarius

You have your A game going today, but don’t let it go to your head. You’re at your most capable. If someone tries to spring a surprise request on you, you’ll probably see it coming. Be low-key, don’t build expectations, and then excel. So long as your ego doesn’t exceed good sense, you’ll be able to accomplish just about anything!

Capricorn

Little or nothing will slow you down or be daunting today. You have so much inner strength (and physical strength, too) that people will have trouble keeping up with you. Do something special today, or perhaps excel at something significant and challenging that will be easily within your grasp. You may find out later that you were dazzling and that you inspired several people to more energetically pursue their passions.

Aquarius

People may look to you to get some enthusiasm back into their lives. Even if you're sagging a little in spirit yourself, you can still inspire others. This can cheer you up, too, so don't underestimate a small glimmer of joy in something that you genuinely love. No one has to agree with you. They only have to allow you to do what feels best to you—and you to them.

Pisces

If you are with someone, they will make every possible effort to deepen your relationship and establish real intimacy. If you are single, organize a little pleasure trip or a night out on the town. You might be inclined to look on the gloomy side of things, even when they are going really well. Don’t miss any opportunities. Long-awaited results or successes may appear before your eyes.

A visit to Muju International Groceries

by Sabina Feder '25
STAFF WRITER

On the north side of Utica, about 20 minutes from campus, is Muju International Groceries. This store certainly delivers on its name: the clean grocery store aisles are lined with ingredients that would otherwise be very difficult to find in Central New York, from fresh red chilis to frozen parathas. Grace Rai, a refugee from Bhutan, started the store when she first arrived in Utica and realized that many foods that were crucial for her cooking were just not available. During the pandemic, she began a grocery delivery service, and shortly thereafter, the store moved into its current location at Champlin Avenue in Utica. This store is easily worth the trip for the groceries alone.

Muju's logo, a cat happily sipping some bubble tea, conceals the fact that this store is so much more. At the front counter, you can order bubble teas, chais, snack foods, and full meals. If you are already in the store, I highly recommend buying some food and a drink. Grab the veggie momos, a samosa, and a masala chai and reward yourself for stocking up that kitchen. In an ideal world, you sit down in their decorated, cushioned seating area and eat all your food while it is piping hot. If you have the time, play a quick round of Chinese checkers.

As far as I know, Muju is the only place serving Nepalese food in the Utica area. Since they are not a restaurant, their capacity for prepared meals is limited, but they still have a range of foods to choose from.

Bubble Teas: If you are making a trip just for bubble tea, I would not place Muju first on the list. Their boba is soft and chewy, but the majority of the teas, from milk to Thai, didn't have the strongest flavor and trend toward the overly sugar side. However, if you are already in the store and are craving bubble tea, I would recommend the coffee flavor. The coffee is strong without being bitter, and the sugar from the boba adds the perfect note.

Momos: One order of these classic Nepalese dumplings is the perfect size for a quick, easy post-grocery snack: ten small, round dumplings, either steamed or fried. My favorite was the steamed vegetable because the filling had more flavor than the chicken. The dough is relatively thick compared to the size of the filling, but it's hard to complain when your mouth is stuffed with steaming, soft momos that melt in your mouth and warm your bones. The sweet chili dipping sauce is essential to the experience. I also tried the momos in soup, but the sesame broth wasn't my favorite. It had a bit of a chunky texture, and I didn't think the flavor added much to the momo experience, especially when momos stand so well on their own.

Chatpate: I had never tried this dish before, and now that I have, I won't ever go back. A classic street food in both Nepal and India, Muju's chatpate consists of puffed rice, lightly pickled onions, and cilantro. It's dressed with lemon juice, some chili, and a mix of spices. I couldn't stop shoveling this into my face. One caveat: since it is puffed rice, you have to eat it right when you get it or the dish will get a little soggy. Muju gives you a box absolutely filled to the brim, so share with a friend. This is also the most bang for your buck. At just $4.99, it's a no brainer.

Samosa: It won't take much to convince you: thick, flaky pastry. Heavily spiced filling. Heaven in your mouth. Go. It's only $1.48.

Nepali Chicken Chaumin (also Chow Mein): These noodles were the most underwhelming dish for me. I loved the spice in them (I got a medium), but from the first bite, I couldn't get over the sweetness. This sauce is made with ketchup, and the artificial sweetness was a hurdle I couldn't get over. I'm also personally not a huge fan of overwhelming sweetness in dishes I expect to be savory, but if you enjoy that, this dish is worth a try. Just make sure you get it spicy—the heat comes in after the sweetness hits and helps mellow it out.

Masala Chai: Advance warning—this is piping hot. I burned myself on the plastic lid before any liquid even touched my mouth. After it cooled down just a little, I burned myself again because I was too eager to drink it. The cinnamon immediately hits you, and then the cloves and cardamom start to kick in. The sweetness level was exactly where I like it, not cloying but enough to give you a little jitter. They also gave me a little package of Parle-G biscuits to dip in the chai (Fun fact: this brand of biscuits is the best selling across the entire world). My only gripe was that I wanted more; the eight ounce cup just wasn't enough for me.

Overall, although the food was really good, I wouldn't come here for an entire meal. Their best food was the snacking dishes, which makes Muju perfect for a trip to stock your pantry and also put something warm and delicious in your stomach. I know I will come back to stock my kitchen, and I don't think I will be able to leave without a little snack or drink. If you find yourself here and hungry, I would go with the masala chai, veggie momos, samosas, and chatpate.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SABINA FEDER '25

Muju offers a selection of bubble teas. Sabina recommends the coffee flavor.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SABINA FEDER '25

Sabina tried the Nepali chicken chaumin (left) and the momos (right).

PHOTO COURTESY OF SABINA FEDER '25

Muju sells chatpate: a classic Nepalese street food made of puffed rice.

Milwalkee's Giannis Antetokounmpo doesn't need anyone's approval

by Patrick Cleary '24
STAFF WRITER

On April 27, the Milwaukee Bucks were eliminated by the Miami Heat in the first round of the NBA playoffs after five games. This was only the fifth time in NBA history where a first-seeded team fell to an eight-seed. After the game, Bucks star player Giannis Antetokounmpo was asked by a reporter if the season was a "failure." In a stunning response lasting nearly two minutes, Giannis refuted the idea that Milwaukee's season constituted a failure. The statement received backlash on social media and from basketball pundits. To some, this loss represents a "stain" on Giannis's resume, a very real thing that exists outside his BasketballReference page. It made me sad, and not just because I am a fan of his; it points to a problem within sports culture. We act like the discourse is the reason we play—basically, we talk as if creating arguments around who is greater is the only reason sport is being played. Every Lionel Messi goal adds to his tally against Cristiano Ronaldo; a championship ring for LeBron James only matters because it gives him another leg up on his quest to chase the ghost who played in Chicago. This is not why we play, and it is bad for sports culture.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JONATHAN DANIEL/GETTY IMAGES

Giannis Antetokounmpo was voted the NBA's Most Valuable Player after his team's 2021 championship win.

We play because sports are beautiful, because they create spectacles we remember for all our lives. When the dust clears and the athlete hangs up his cleats, then we remember the good times—but in the age of endless debate shows and "stan Twitter," we have created a climate where players are actively compared to their predecessors, with any slip-up becoming a mark on their "legacy." Accomplishments become ammunition for endless comparisons: Michael Jordan's six rings versus LeBron's eight straight finals appearances, Messi's Ballons d'Or against Ronaldo's Champions League trophies. It assumes there is only one way to have a career or one way to define success. Kyle Lowry was a bench player in the NBA who only became a perennial All-Star at 30 and a champion at 33. It is hardly a mark on his precious legacy that he developed later as a player. The same could be said of Luka Modrić, Steve Nash, Tom Brady, Chauncey Billups, or Randy Johnson.

Similarly, there was some backlash after several international stars at the World Baseball Classic, an international tournament held before the MLB season, said winning the WBC for their country would be more meaningful than winning for their MLB club. That is how these athletes define success. They do not play to lock in stats and trophies for an artificial argument; rather, they play because they love their country.

Moving forward, let us build a culture where opinions reflect the speaker, rather than searching for an objective truth that does not exist. One cannot really "prove" that player X is better than player Y. However, if you do believe player X is the greatest, what does that say about you? Do you, say, prefer LeBron over Jordan? Well, that means you value longevity and versatility over individual short-term dominance; there is nothing wrong with that by all means. The responsibility is on all of us to make that change. Sports culture can be all that more enriching if only we ignore these topics that exist only to create derision and virality. Well, only until you remember this is all happening on Twitter and ESPN anyway, in which case you may as well not try.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CATHERINE IVILL/GETTY IMAGES

Argentina won the World Cup last year, led by Lionel Messi, yet achievements such as these are often debased by endless debate.

Distant and distanced; the story of non-Northeastern students at Hamilton

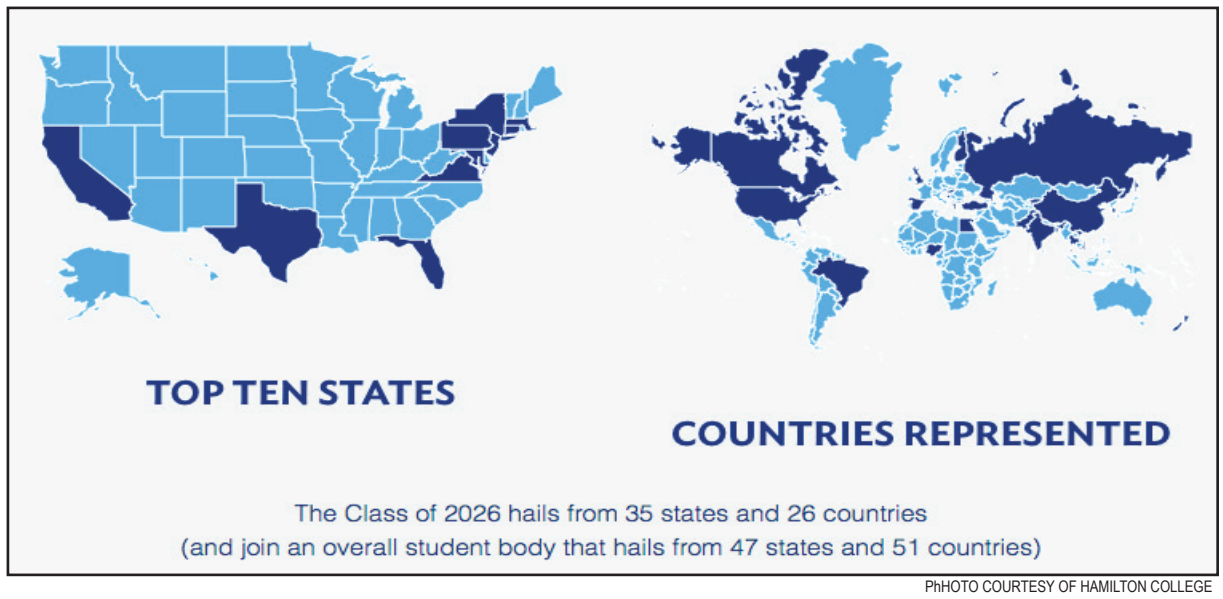
by Sydney Piccoli '25
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

Hamilton College prides itself on a self-proclaimed diverse student body, inviting students from around the world to its campus to learn from one another. The Hamilton College website states that "At Hamilton, we celebrate diversity in all forms because our community benefits from the perspectives we share and the mutual respect we show one another." However, on a given day, dozens of students joke that everyone on Hamilton's campus is either a JOB—just outside Boston—or from the New York metropolitan area, warranting a deeper investigation into just how vast Hamilton's geographic reach actually is.

The Class of 2026 hails from 35 states, with the top 10 states being California, Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Virginia. These 10 states are also some of the highest visited by Hamilton admissions officers according to data provided on the Admissions and Aid section of Hamilton's website. When asked for state-by-state data for Hamilton students, Dean of Admissions John McLaughlin responded, "As a policy, we don't provide such granular detail on each class because it can be easily misinterpreted without the broader context of the prospect pool, the applicant pool, the admitted population, and the enrolled class. We traditionally see a lot of interest from students in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic; however, we're also seeing growth in parts of the South and West in line with population trends. The presence of Florida, California, and Texas in our top 10 states reflects some of these trends."

Many of the College's admissions officers visit regional schools because it is convenient. As John McLaughlin describes, "Logistics plays a large role in our travel schedule and ability to reach schools and organizations. Staffing, available school visit times, and different time zones are big factors that determine where we can travel and how we build our itineraries during the limited amount of time that we have available to spend both in person and virtually in each region of the world."

Explaining how Hamilton Admissions chooses which schools to visit, McLaughlin remarked, "We focus on schools with strong students, and we prioritize relationships with schools and programs that serve talented and historically underrepresented students in higher education. We have historical and current data that show where these students are located, and we use these data to inform our planning." Despite the efforts McLaughlin described, the Hamilton College website states that Hamilton student body is 27 percent of U.S. students of color.



PhHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE

A map on Hamilton's website depicting the top ten states students hail from.

McLaughlin also described how students moving may muddy data on students' homes. "For enrolled students, there are many different reporting conventions for the student's non-Hamilton address. The answers may be different from one moment to the next based on these reporting conventions and student enrollment status."

Some US high school students found out about Hamilton College through more informal modes. Ileana Anghel '26 attended a private school near Syracuse, NY with a student body of primarily White and Asian students belonging to the upper and middle-upper classes. Her school's only college counselor, as well as a few teachers, were alums of Hamilton College, and a consistent number of students from her high school attended Hamilton College each year. Hamilton College visited her high school in person. As Anghel details, "People knew about Hamilton College because my school's guidance counselor and teachers had attended Hamilton and spoke very highly of their experiences. It was widely known in my high school that Hamilton College was a place where students could succeed."

Other high school students find out about Hamilton College through third parties, especially Questbridge, a scholarship program designed to make college admissions more accessible for low-income students. Abby Jones '26, who is from Idaho, remarked that, "I only heard about Hamilton through QuestBridge. I do not think I would have otherwise heard about Hamilton."

Similarly, Aria Hackamack '26, who is from Arizona, was recommended to apply through QuestBridge. "I think the lack of geographic diversity is mostly just because of the reach of the name. A lot of people in this area have heard of Hamilton, but I had not heard of Hamilton until I was looking through QuestBridge, and I might have not even applied if I had not been like, 'oh, this looks interesting' and clicked on the name."

> ***"We visited nearly twice as many high schools through virtual engagements than we had ever visited in person in a single year. We've engaged with hundreds of schools, and thousands of students in places and spaces we had not been able to visit before the advent of virtual opportunities."***
> ***- John McLaughlin***

Ashylia Sloane '26, who hails from North Carolina, mentioned that "My high school Spanish teacher emailed me a link for Questbridge and told me to check it out. I ignored it for a while, then at some point, I looked back at the link and did some research to make sure it was legit. That's how I found

out about Hamilton."

While many students from outside of Hamilton's top reach states heard about the school through QuestBridge and other third parties, the school is making an effort to more consistently reach out to those students. "Our physical recruitment plans have been disrupted by the COVID pandemic over the last three years. During this period, we've enhanced our virtual opportunities and connected with thousands of students through live and asynchronous virtual programming," remarked McLaughlin. He continued, "We find our virtual programming provides many students with the opportunity to learn more about Hamilton. We visited nearly twice as many high schools through virtual engagements than we had ever visited in person in a single year. We've engaged with hundreds of schools, and thousands of students in places and spaces we had not been able to visit before the advent of virtual opportunities."

Students who are not from the Northeast must consider travel logistics and expenses more seriously, negatively impacting their mental health. As Analisa Lona '26, from Missouri, details, "If I were to just live in New York, packing my stuff up for the summer would not be that hard. My family would just drive down, get all my stuff and take it back, and then we'll do the same thing coming back. But with being out of state or being so far away in Kansas City, my mom has to fly up here ahead of time to then rent a car to then help me pack up all my stuff and take it to a storage unit." Lona also described transportation difficulties, "I have to try to coordinate my flight with the time that Hamilton's transportation can take me there. I had to take the 1:00 a.m. transportation from Syracuse back here when I could have gotten an earlier flight and be back here like immediately. Sometimes when I cannot align the flight with the shuttle or with their transportation I have to get an Uber to the train station."

PHOTO COURTESY OF HAMILTON COLLEGE INSTAGRAM

First-years meet during move-in day.

Arshdeep Kaur '26, from Indiana, added that "Going home for breaks, buying a storage unit, it's a lot harder being further away…My other friends that live in the Northeast can just go back home all the time. I'm not able to afford the frequent trips back home as much as my other friends are because their houses are a lot closer." There are also special events and holidays that students living in the non-tri-state area cannot go home and celebrate, leading to feelings of personal isolation. Kaur expressed "I'm a Punjabi. There were a lot of holidays that happened that I wish I could go home and celebrate, but there's no one here to celebrate with. So that made me feel a little sad."

In cases of emergencies, living far away proves difficult for other students to return home or even access home virtually. Eva Jo Mcilraith '26, from Oregon, describes that "My first semester, I had a lot of family problems that were happening at home with health. It was really hard for that to happen while I was here. I feel like I could not be there to support my family."

"I never get to go home, ever. I was here for spring break because it's a thousand dollars to fly back and forth between Boise and here. I wish it was a drive away, it's like a seven-hour flight, not adding in layovers, but it's just not affordable. It can feel really isolating."
- Abby Jones '26

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Although it only happens rarely for some students, knowing people from the same state can alleviate feelings of isolation and stress. Lona has only encountered two people from Missouri, one of whom is also Questbridge. She described an instance where she recognized that a Hamilton student had a sticker on her laptop referring to a museum in Kansas City where there's a giant birdie on the front lawn. "I saw that on her laptop and some other references for the city. And I'm like, 'Oh my God, are you from Kansas City?' She says yeah, and that she's only met one other person on this campus that's from Kansas City. It's a nice experience when you find someone who relates to where you're from." She continued, "We have just a nice, 'hey, we're from the same state,' so we kind of get where different challenges arise when it comes to traveling. It's like when you meet someone who has similar interests to you — you feel recognized and that you have a shared experience."

Jones describes Hamilton's demographics as "definitely majority tri-state area. I have only encountered people from my state once, and that was during orientation when they did the map game where people from specific states all got together, and one of the people from my state was an orientation leader." Hackamack added, "I never see people from my state. It kind of sucks because I don't really have anyone to talk to about when I am missing home. I don't miss feeling like my hair was on fire or like I was going sweat to death. But I miss the street tacos and being able to go to Mexico whenever I wanted to." Hackamack continues, saying that "It's sad because I do not really get to talk with people about that experience because everyone from New York has always been closer to Canada than they will ever will be to Mexico. And even when people are like, 'oh yeah, I've been to Mexico,' they've been to Cancún."

Mcilraith mentioned that, "I have encountered people from my state, but they are all from the same really rich neighborhood in Oregon. If you talk to anyone from Oregon, there's at least a 50% chance that they're from Lake Oswego here. A lot of them come from the same high school, so I'm assuming that there's probably a counselor there that has a connection with Hamilton." However, they expressed feeling a connection to out-of-state students. "I feel like we share a lot of experiences, like where are you going to put your stuff in storage when you leave? How's that gonna work? Complaining about airports and how to get through Syracuse and how to get to Albany, and all the shuttles."

Hamilton still can prove to be a campus where people from different states can come together. Lona concludes that "To people who are from the tri-state area, I still think it's pretty cool to meet them here. It's not the same shared experience or the same relation as with people from Missouri, but that's the reason why I came to Hamilton to begin with, to meet new people."